

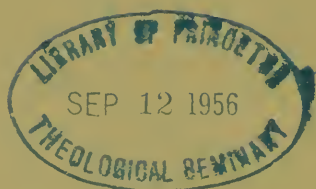
H.T. Kuist

Exegetical Footnotes
to the
Epistle to the Hebrews

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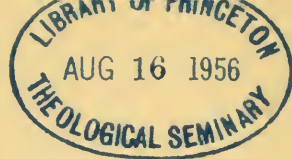
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Exegetical Footnotes
to the
Epistle to the Hebrews

by

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THE LOGIC OF HEBREWS 1:4-14

To understand this type of literature the student must be able to supply mentally what is implied but unexpressed.

Great masters have a way of concealing their artistry, and this is apparently the case here. The clarity of our author's logic, by the force of which he seeks to carry his first major point with his readers, is not at once traceable. It is almost lost in the magnificent blending of Old Testament quotations which lend a note of authority to his utterance. It is cleverly veiled within the extraordinary beauty of his language, and by the impressive grandeur of his imagery. Details of this type in the content of a passage are most likely to catch the first attention of a reader. They give color to the utterance. But once let the student occupy himself with the form of a passage, *i. e.*, with the relations in which such details stand to each other or to the broader scope of the passage, then its structure becomes luminous, as follows.

The Son is better than the angels	Vs. 4
He has inherited a more excellent name than they	Vs. 4
And a more excellent name indicates superior rank	Understood
It follows	
A less excellent name indicates inferior rank	By contrast
Name angel inferior to name Son	Understood
In the Scriptures no angel is ever called Son	Vs. 5
THEREFORE angels are inferior to Son	Conclusion
The less worship the greater	Understood
According to prophetic history angels worship Son	Vs. 6
THEREFORE the angels are the less	Conclusion
The angels are inferior to the Son	Proved above
And the angels change while the Son endures	Vs. 7, 8, 9
What changes is inferior to what endures	Understood
It follows	
What endures is superior to what changes	By contrast
And the Creator endures while things created change	Vs. 10, 11, 12
THEREFORE the Son is superior to the angels	Conclusion
He who reigns ranks higher than those who serve	Understood
The Son sits on the right hand, while angels serve	Vs. 13, 14
THEREFORE the Son is superior to the angels	Conclusion

Summary by points

The angels inferior :		The Son superior :	
(angels)	By name	Son	Vs. 4, 5
Worship	In function	Is worshipped	Vs. 6
Change	In character	Endures	Vs. 7-12
Creatures		The Creator	
Serve	In dignity	Reigns	Vs. 13, 14

Directions for Study

In the chapter before us, we observe how the majestic first sentence (vv. 1-4) viewed from its elemental, "God . . . hath . . . spoken," opens the way in its closing words, "a more excellent name than they," for the exposition of the first major point in the Epistle. Let the student now compare the text with the preceding restatement in the form of premises and conclusions, and he will recognize how the author employs a generally accepted truth, *e. g.*, the less worship the greater, as an unexpressed major premise upon which to base his expressed minor premise, *e. g.*, vs. 6, and an unexpressed but nevertheless felt conclusion, *e. g.*, therefore the angels are the less, and so on.

Some students will doubtless want to identify the various types of syllogism he employs. All will be interested in observing how he has struck a pleasing and orderly balance between the negative and positive conclusions. All will note with interest the impressive persuasiveness of the queries with which he opens and closes this presentation, thus completing the symmetry of the passage.

A Question

Why should the author bring angels into his exposition at all?

A Comment

"The author does not mean, How great must the Son be, since He is greater even than the angels! but, How great is the Son, and how incomparably inferior are the angels" (Peake, *The New-Century Bible*, p. 79).

GOD'S WORD AND GOD'S REST

HEBREWS 4: 11-13 *

Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest. . . .

For the word of God is living, and active. . . .

When Hebrews 4: 12-13 is read with the preceding verse, from which it is usually severed, the whole passage glows with its true sense and full meaning. The church Fathers, beginning with Eusebius, incorrectly applied the epithet "word of God" to the Incarnate Word, just as the word *λόγος* is correctly applied in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel to the Son. They doubtless were led to interpret the phrase under the influence of Revelation 19: 13, "And his name is called The Word of God," or they considered the living word of this passage as equivalent to "the Word of life" in 1 John 1: 1.

The broader scope of the author's treatment, however, will not allow this. True it is that he has begun his eloquent Epistle with the magnificent prelude, "God . . . hath . . . spoken. . . ." And this final Revealer, the Son, in whom He hath spoken, constitutes the center of interest in chapters one and two. He indeed is God's final word to man. But, as one's mind sympathetically follows the trend of thought in the third and fourth chapters, it becomes clear that the author's language presents what God has spoken under a somewhat different aspect.

When these chapters are read with our passage in view, then the living word of 4: 12 becomes at once a spoken and a heard word. The phraseology of speaking and hearing, repeated over and over again in these two chapters, all deliberately contributes to the significant idea of harmonious identification between God and the believer, which finds its ultimate consummation in 4: 11-13. Take for instance 3: 7, "Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, To-day if ye shall hear his voice, Harden not your hearts"; or 3: 15, "while it is said, To-day if ye shall hear his voice, Harden not your hearts";

* The Biblical Review, October, 1931, pp. 579-581.

or 4:7, "saying in David . . . To-day if ye shall hear his voice, Harden not your hearts." (See also 4:4, 8.) And finally in 4:2, "the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard."

By the time the thoughtful reader has reached 4:12-13, therefore, his mind has already been prepared to apprehend the full force of the appeal to diligence in 4:11, and the corresponding reason for it in 4:12. "Let us therefore give diligence. . . . For living is the word of God." *Zōn γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ*. The order of the Greek terminology is significant, for it reveals the author's emphasis—"Living is the word of God, and active. . . ." This word is suited to the end for which it is uttered. God is calling, as He always has called, those who would be identified with Him, to a superior type of life, by a word instinct with His own life. His rest is available only to those who share His life, and His life with all His attributes is expressed in His word.

Is it any wonder then, that the author piles up metaphors to describe the effective working of this revelation which is God's word to man? The readers are urged to enter inasmuch as God's word enters! This living word of God enters into, "permeates, transforms, every element in man." These people, like Israel of old, may neglect God's living word, but they may be sure that God's word will not neglect them. They are accountable for their attitude. They may well give heed, for "with God as judge they stand in relation" (*πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος*.—Heb. 4:13. Cf. Thayer). "For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast . . . how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" One can almost hear this warning of 2:3 re-echoed as he arrives at the conclusion of this searching passage.

God's word, then, is a living word, because it is a spoken and a heard word. The disclosure of the divine heart is not complete until it finds a corresponding response in the human heart. God speaks. Man hears. And the consequent fellowship, involving vital union of the hearer with the word is rest.

"Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest. . . . For the word of God is living, and active."

And I smiled to think God's greatness
flowed around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness, his rest.

“HOW MUCH MORE” *

HEBREWS 9:13-14

“The natural man,” says Sohm, “is a born catholic.” He might have added, “So also is the Jew.” For what the one seeks in the mass, the other finds in the Day of Atonement. Both feel that, what for them is the culminating point of worship, involves something done—something mysterious, something wonderful, something final, something which consciously quiets the condemning accusations of their sins. The New Testament provides a definite answer to this yearning in the heart of man for a worship in which something is really done. Rising to the high point of his priestly argument the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews draws a contrast *a fortiori* between the old and the new :

“For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:13-14.)

To speak of this argument as priestly is to recognize the author's point of view. For, as Moffatt has well said: “Religion in this Epistle is regarded as worship, and worship implies sacrifice. There is no access for man to God without sacrifice, and no religion without a priest.”†

The magnificent affirmation of these verses, at which the author has gradually arrived by well calculated steps, is introduced in verses 11 and 12 by the simple yet majestic “Christ . . . entered” With what a wealth of amplifying imagery does our author endeavor to excite wonder and elicit faith on the part of his ritually-minded readers. “But Christ . . . entered” Let any present day reader examine the amplifying, pictorial—yet none the less real—detail which completes this sentence, and he will find answers to the what, where, how, and why of this awe-inspiring asser-

* The Biblical Review, January 1932, pp. 79-85.

† Moffatt, Commentary, p. xiv.

tion. He will then be mentally prepared to grasp the full significance of the author's "how much more" of verses 13-14.

"How much more." The point is clearly one of quality. In what sense is the quality of Christ's sacrifice superior to the sacrifices of the old regime? Two points of superiority are involved, the one implying the other: A superiority of value, and a superiority in consequences.

Difference in quality implies difference of value. The value of the old sacrifices, as the author intimates, was merely ceremonial. The shedding of the blood of bulls and goats and the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer were only a ceremony. Such sacrifices could only pronounce a man clean provisionally, could only avail to effect external purification. According to the Levitical code, when the worshiper had violated a precept or law he had automatically placed himself out of covenant relation with God. By offering a properly constituted sacrifice he might re-establish this relation. He would then be ceremonially clean, now sanctified "unto the cleanness of the flesh."

The sacrifice of Christ, however, was not merely ceremonial. In fact, it was offered in a higher sphere. It was a truly redemptive act. It was something supremely spiritual. As such it has a quality all its own and has just so much more value for the worshiper, for it accomplishes a genuinely spiritual result. His sacrifice transcends a merely ceremonial act involved in shedding the blood of so many dumb brutes. What fellowship can there be between a worshiper and an animal victim? A spiritual sacrifice involves personal identification between the worshiper and the one sacrificed. Consequently, the worshiper experiences a real cleansing. His conscience is cleansed "from dead works to serve the living God." He is ready for spiritual service because he is now spiritually motivated. How incomparable, then, the sacrifice of Christ to the sacrifices of the old regime! How much more? The value of the one transcends the value of the other as the quality of the spiritual transcends the ceremonial. The consequences too are contrasted. The one is real; the other is provisional. The one cleanses the conscience; the other cleanses only "the flesh."

But the reader's mind is not satisfied at this point. What are values, and what are the consequences without adequate reasons? "Why," asks the inquiring reader, "is all this true?" The author, as though already having anticipated such a question, supplies

the answer in the amplifying phraseology of the passage. This phraseology is based, as Westcott has aptly suggested, on the considerations that Christ's sacrifice was voluntary, rational, spontaneous, moral. Let us observe how these aspects of Christ's redeeming sacrifice are here developed.

First of all, Christ's sacrifice was voluntary. According to the author's language *He* "offered himself." His own will was behind His sacrifice. There was no compulsion about it. Imagine a bull being pulled from the stall or a goat pushed out from among the flock to the appointed place of sacrifice before the altar. A beast had no choice in the matter; its death was its doom. But Christ's death was His opportunity. Would any of the readers of the Epistle recall the words of our Lord, as commonly known among them, and as later reported to us in the Fourth Gospel: "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself." Being voluntary the sacrifice of Christ carries with it the incomparable spiritual benefits of the new covenant already mentioned. What sacrifice was ever like His?

But the sacrifice of Christ was also rational. A death even on the human plane is vastly different from the death of a brute. It carries with it a rational experience. Had Christ been offered unconsciously how could His offering have been above that of beasts? But He "offered *himself*," says our author. As a moral being He went to the altar realizing all that was involved. His pain was more than physical. It had vast moment and deep meaning. Would any of the original readers of the Epistle, who themselves had first heard the word from the lips of those who had heard the Lord, recall the agonizing words on the cross, or perchance the triumphant exclamation of our Lord in the garden, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt"? This rational element in Christ's sacrifice places it on a higher level than the animal sacrifices of the old regime, and consequently its results are just that much more superior. What sacrifice was ever like His?

Christ's sacrifice was also spontaneous. He *offered* Himself. Being "without blemish," He qualified as an offering. This also was a requirement of the old sacrifices. But, as affirms our author, "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (10:4). How could an offering on an animal level, however perfect, ever do that? All such a sacrifice could do was to pronounce a man ceremonially clean. Although such an offering involved a

provisional reconciliation to God it was nevertheless impotent to "take away sins." It lacked that spontaneous element so characteristic of the supreme sacrifice: "Lo, I am come . . . to do thy will, O God" (10:7). Such words are suited only to one involved in high personal dedication to a holy cause.

Being under no external constraint, but "having loved his own even unto the end," the act of Christ in going to the cross had a spontaneity all its own, and consequently carries with it an efficacy all its own. His whole self was involved in the act. What sacrifice was ever like His?

The death of Christ was moral, "not a mere mechanical performance of a prescribed rite." His act was not self-denial, but the denial of self. To offer a sacrifice under the old regime cost the worshiper something, but to inaugurate the new covenant it cost Christ everything, the shedding of His blood, "his own blood." The death of a beast, involving nothing but the principle of animal life, was devoid of actual redemptional worth because it was merely the offering of its body. To kill an irrational brute merely released its blood for ceremonial purposes. Its blood was only as valuable as the price on its head. While it provided external purification, it had no moral adequacy behind it.

"Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain."

But behind the death of Christ was His life. To shed His blood meant giving His life. This gave His death moral significance. Measured by the perfectness of His life, this gave His death a wealth of redeeming worth. He was "without blemish." He had a perfect moral history behind Him. What sacrifice was ever like His?

Nor is this all. Since His offering of Himself was voluntary, rational, spontaneous, moral, it qualified as something supremely spiritual. He offered Himself, "through eternal Spirit" (*διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου*).* His real offering is in that eternal realm which brings the worshiper to the living God. Relatively Christ's death occurred at a given place and at a certain time, but really His act transcended time and space. A time-span of nineteen hundred years can exhaust

* The absence of the article favors reference to the person of Christ, not the Holy Spirit, and makes the phrase practically equivalent to 'through his divine nature.'

neither its meaning nor its efficacy. How could the sacrifice of One who had "the power of an indissoluble life" (Heb. 7:16) be anything else than timeless and boundless in its redeeming efficacy? Having offered Himself "through eternal Spirit," He provides access for those who live under the limits of time and space into the eternal, unseen world, where time and space are no more. He brings us to the living God. Henceforth the worshiper lives in His service.

The foregoing exegesis harmonizes with the leading design of the Epistle, which apparently was to restrain Hebrew Christians from abandoning their new faith in Christ for the old ways they had already renounced. In keeping with this design the author does not attempt to show how intimately the two are related, but how vastly superior the one is over the other: How much more!

The Day of Atonement was the culminating point of the Old Testament ritual. These verses, using the Day of Atonement as a background, are the culminating point of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the "how much more" of verses 13-14 the argument has reached its highest peak. Here is the "something" which alone can genuinely satisfy the yearning of the natural man. Here is a Priest who Himself is the offering. Here, indeed, is something done—something mysterious, something wonderful, something final, something which deals adequately with the sinful heart of man, by actually bringing man into redeemed and vitalizing relations with the living God.

“WE HAVE . . . A MINISTER”

HEBREWS 8: 1-10: 18 RESTATED

The Author's Point of View

In an illuminating comment, McFadyen* describes the author's point of view as follows: “All through the epistle we have to remember that the author is describing Christianity not as a life but as a worship, that the terms he uses are therefore ritual rather than moral. The question the epistle seeks to answer is: ‘How can men get access to God?’ . . . The answer of the author is: Not through anything in man's character, not through any human achievement, but only through something done on our behalf once for all by Jesus.” As the student keeps the author's point of view, thus defined, clearly in mind, the argument, at times quite intricate, unfolds with consistency and meaning.

* * *

The Passage Restated

My readers, the pith of my previous argument (Chapters 1-7), is simply this: ‘We have a minister of the true tabernacle (8: 1-6), who is the mediator of a better covenant’ (8: 7-10: 18). This I now propose to elaborate.

A better covenant, I say (8: 7-13), for according to prophetic expectation (Jeremiah 31: 31ff.), the first covenant, being but a temporary expedient, and consequently far from faultless, was bound to be replaced in time by a second (vs. 7). When the old covenant failed because the fathers regarded it not, as a condition of enjoying the benefits of the land of promise (The Holy City was destroyed 586 B. C.), a new covenant with Israel and Judah was promised through the prophet Jeremiah (vv. 8, 9). While the character of the old covenant was but an external arrangement, consisting of commandments written on stone to be observed by the people, the new covenant was pronounced by the prophet to be inward, written as a

* Through Eternal Spirit, pp. 153, 154.

living impulse in the heart and mind of God's people (vs. 10). Furthermore, the new covenant was to be effective, for it involved immediate knowledge of and access to God, making Him available to all from least to greatest (vs. 11), and assured both pardon and forgiveness of sins by the merciful faithfulness of God. The inauguration of this new covenant becomes all the more apparent with the aging and vanishing of the old (vs. 13. Does the author indicate that the fall of Jerusalem, 70 A. D., had already taken place, or that it is imminent?).

Not only has a better covenant with God's people been provided, but also a more excellent ministry of the same (9:1-14). Consider, on the one hand, the ministry of the old covenant: (vv. 1-10) Its scene: material, a sanctuary of this world (vv. 1-5); Its offering: continuous, daily in the Holy Place; once a year in the Most Holy Place, and not without blood (vv. 6, 7); Its value: provisional, being but a parable for the time present (vv. 8, 9); Its limitation: imperfect, since it could not set the conscience of the worshiper permanently at rest (vs. 10).

Consider, on the other hand, the ministry of the new covenant (9:11-14); Its scene: spiritual, "The greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands" (vs. 11); Its offering: adequate, "once for all, through his own blood" (vs. 12); Its value: permanent, "having obtained eternal redemption" (vs. 12); Its excellence: effective, since it relates the worshiper to God in living service (vv. 13, 14).

Let me now recite how His office as Mediator of a new covenant validates and establishes the new Priest's office as Minister of the true sanctuary (9:15-10:18; *Note*: This becomes clear when the points below are considered. The student must grasp not only the general truths implied, but also relate to them the particular ideas stated, since the passage, especially verse 15, is put in unusually concentrated form).

Any covenant holds in view a goal to be realized. The goal of the old was an inheritance of the land promised to Abraham, and the enjoyment thereof. The goal of the new is an eternal inheritance of spiritual life for all of God's people (vs. 15).

Any covenant provides a means of achieving its goal. The means of the old was a sacrificial system appointed by God and was designed to keep the people within the blessings of the covenant relation, by providing for the removal of transgressions, in the death

of sacrificial victims. The means of the new is now provided, in that a death has taken place, just as the death of any testator provides for the fulfillment of the terms of his will (vs. 15).

Any covenant provides for any failure of the appointed means. The appointed means of the old, having failed to make the conscience of the worshiper perfect, left the transgressions of the old covenant unredeemed. The new covenant now cancels the failures of the old by redeeming the transgressions made under the latter, since the Mediator obtained eternal redemption through His own blood (vs. 15).

The reason why the death of the Mediator was necessary in order to make His more excellent ministry in the true tabernacle possible, is seen by way of illustration in two ways: first in secular law (vv. 16, 17), then in ritual law (vv. 18-22). According to secular law no testament is in force until the death of the testator. Viewed as a testament the new covenant is now in force, since the Mediator, by whom the testament was committed to us, died. According to ritual law, this is also true. Even the old covenant was not set up without the shedding of blood, for a death releases the life in the blood for redemptive purposes (vs. 18). Those who lived under the old covenant, when they received the law, were sprinkled with blood (vv. 19, 20). The tabernacle with all its vessels was dedicated by being sprinkled with blood (vs. 21). May it not be said according to ritual law, that apart from blood-ritual remission of sins does not take place? (vs. 22).

All of these points indicate that Christ's death as Mediator of a new covenant qualifies Him as Minister of the true tabernacle. This prepares the way to consider still another factor, namely that the validity of Christ's death as Mediator of a new covenant, establishes Him as Minister of the true tabernacle (9:23-28).

This validity is recognized when the true character of Christ's sacrifice is apprehended: (Observe the contrast between the "all things cleansed" of vs. 22 and "heavenly things cleansed" of vs. 23). His offering is valid since it is real: "Before the face of God" (vv. 23, 24). His offering is valid since it is single: "Now once . . . he hath been manifested" (vv. 25, 26). His offering is valid since it is final: (vv. 27, 28) "Christ's death cancelled sin so completely that he can have no further connection with it, but just as life, completed by death, is followed, not by a new term of life, but by judgment, so

the life of Christ has fulfilled its purpose so completely that nothing remains to be done save to let its issues work themselves out.”*

Finally, the efficacy of Christ's death as Mediator of a new covenant is demonstrated in a number of ways: (10:1-18). The rites of the old covenant were ineffectual, because they were but a shadow of things to come, being impotent to provide permanent spiritual values in the worshipers (vv. 1-4). The sacrifice of Christ is effectual because it is His own. His sacrifice was the union of His will with God's, therefore a real and personal transaction, by which we are sanctified (vv. 5-10). The sacrifice of Christ is a finished work. "He sat down forever" (vv. 11-14). The sacrifice of Christ, according to prophecy, provides permanent spiritual power for the forgiveness of sins. It need now but be tried and experienced, by drawing near, and by taking advantage of it. Thus, my readers, in the death of Christ the reign of sin is doomed (vv. 15-18ff).

* * *

In concluding his argument with the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah, the author has returned to the point from which he started, and thus has passed through a full-orbed exposition of the meaning of Christ's death, ritually interpreted, in terms of the old. He follows this exposition with a fervent appeal to his readers to make the truth of his argument articulate in practical Christian experience (10:19-end).

* Peake, *New-Century Bible*, p. 194.

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE . . . MAKE YOU PERFECT" *

HEBREWS 13:21

It appears to be difficult for us in our highly mechanized age to catch the appealing significance of this engaging term *καταρτίζω*, translated by our English versions in a variety of ways, but at this place "*make you perfect.*" We speak, for instance, of a perfect performance, by which we mean flawless from a technical point of view, or we talk of a perfect day by which we imply that nothing occurred to mar our pleasure or to discomfort us. No such notion, however, adhered to this word as heard upon the lips of first century Christians. They took up a word commonly employed in the market-place and the artisan's shop with purely mundane associations and used it, as in this passage, to suggest a redemptive value. What, then, did these first century Christians, who first heard this Epistle, "our chief witness to the feeling of spiritual exhaustion which overtook the early church,"† understand the author to mean when, in the benediction which crowns its close, he prayed, "Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect."

The individuality of this word is best appreciated through its derivation, *κατά* + *ἄρτιος*. *Ἄρτιος* (see Liddell and Scott; Thayer, et al.) is derived from *ἄρω*, join, fit. The quality of this root is preserved in the Latin, *articulare*, and in our own English words, articulate, harmony, etc., each of which in its own way reflects some aspect of this simple root idea, join, fit. The preposition *κατά* (root meaning down; derived meaning, through or in succession. Moulton: *Prolegomena*, p. 115; Robertson: *Grammar*, p. 606), when compounded with this root, contemplates a completeness by the blending of successive parts into a whole. Like the simple *ἄρτιος*, upon examination of its various uses it appears to envisage, as Trench has well said, "the adaptation and aptitude of these parts

* The Biblical Review, April 1932, pp. 249-253.

† See Scott: The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 197.

for the ends to which they were designed" (*Synonyms*, sec. xxii); or as Westcott has put it, "It includes thought of the harmonious combination of different powers" (*Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 449). What would otherwise have been merely an abstraction has been made concrete for us in manifold human experiences, either as recorded in ancient literature or intimated by its more popular applications. Is it any wonder that this word with such engaging individuality should have found a many-sided and suggestive use in the affairs of Greek speaking men?

This was a household word. When a householder, for instance, provided a guest chamber and so arranged it as to contribute to the complete comfort and the convenience of his guest he used this word to record his satisfaction. He had made the room perfect; it was fit for a guest. (*Tebtunis Papyri* I, 33, 12. 112 B. C.) When a mother sewed together pieces of cloth for a garment she used this word when contemplating her art. She had made those materials perfect; the garment was fit to wear. (*Papyrus Oxyrhyncus* VIII, 1153, 16. First century A. D.) When a thoughtful housewife prepared a dish for the family by properly blending its ingredients she used this word to describe what she had done. She had made the ingredients perfect; she had prepared a dish that was fit to eat. (See Dioscorides, first century A. D., Sprengel's ed.)

When an apothecary had so compounded a medicine that all the ingredients were properly blended to effect a cure he described the result with this word. He had made the compound perfect; the remedy was fit to cure. (Nicander: *Theriaca*, 954. Second century B. C.)

When a physician had been called upon to set a dislocated limb and had skilfully adjusted the parts so that they might grow normally again, he employed this word when referring to his act. He had made that leg or arm perfect; when healed it would be fit to use. (Galen: *Opus* xix, p. 461, Kuhn's ed. See also Charterier's ed. of Galen, 1679, Vol. II, 281 B. See also Gal. 6:1 for an analogy in spiritual surgery.)

When a potter had kneaded and then skilfully shaped the clay on his wheel until it was a seemingly vessel he viewed his work in terms of this word. He had made the clay perfect. He had "fitted" it for some practical use. (See Rom. 9:22.) Could Browning (Rabbi Ben Ezra) have been reflecting upon this idea when he sang:

So, take and use thy work :
 Amend what flaws may lurk,
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim !
 My times be in thy hand !
 I'perfect the cup as planned !

When a musician took his instrument and so tuned its strings that when chords were struck they produced harmonious music he smiled his recognition with this word. He had made his instrument perfect; it was fit to play. (For a somewhat similar use see Matt. 21:16).

When a sailor had so refitted and rigged up his vessel that the sails were ready when lifted and spread to catch the wind he gave approval to his work with this word. He had made his ship perfect; she was fit to sail. Lightfoot, on 1 Thessalonians 3:10, suggests correctly that *καταρτίζειν* is used by Polybius, second century B. C., to apply to "military and naval preparations," *e. g.*, the manning of a fleet (Polybius I, 21.4; I, 29.1; III, 95.2) and to the supplying of an army with provisions (I, 36.5). The applications are obvious.

When a fisherman had spread his net on the beach after the day's catch and proceeded to mend it where it was strained or broken, he used this word to describe what he had done. He had made his net perfect; it was now fit to catch fish. (See Matt. 4:21; Mark 1:19. For a somewhat different interpretation see article by Wynne, *Expositor* VII, series viii, p. 282ff.)

What a common, workaday word this was! How readily plain, ordinary, working men and women would understand and appreciate its use! How easily those who were accustomed to bear "the burden and heat of the day" would translate the meaning of this term when it brought the boundless grace of God into direct and effective relation to the needs of their own souls. What a benediction for the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews to breathe upon the lagging spirits of these early Christians, whose "piety had lost its glow, and was becoming arid and mechanical" (Scott: *Op. cit.*). It is as though the author prayed: "What you housewives do to make your garments fit to wear, what you apothecaries do to compound medicines fit to cure, what you physicians do to restore broken bones until they are fit to function, what you potters do to turn out vessels fit to use, what you musicians do to tune up instruments fit to play, what you sailors do to rig up ships fit to sail, what you fishermen do to repair torn nets that they may be fit to catch fish,

may the God of peace do for you that you may be fit to do His will in every good thing." "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do his will." There are other alluring points of exegetical interest in this benediction, but they all serve to give added significance to some aspect of the gracious, faith-inspiring, central assertion of this benediction: "Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect."

For the sake of any who may desire to avail themselves of the complete New Testament usage we append the following: *καταρτίζειν*: Matt. 4: 21; 21: 16; Mark 1: 19; Luke 6: 40; Rom. 9: 22; 1 Cor. 1: 10; 2 Cor. 13: 11; Gal. 6: 1; 1 Thess. 3: 10; Heb. 10: 5; 11: 3; 13: 21; 1 Peter 5: 10. *Κατάρτισις*, 2 Cor. 13: 9. *Καταρτισμός*, Eph. 4: 12.

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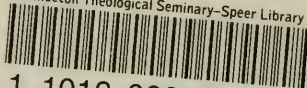


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